

Abstract:

A longitudinal study was carried out in Kikuyu Division (a peri-urban area in central Kenyan highlands) between January 1999 and December 1999 to estimate the baseline parameters on reproductive performance of the sow, as well as health and productivity of grower and preweaning pigs of smallholder herds. Data were collected on 155 breeding pigs, 795 grower pigs and 801 preweaning piglets in 74, 50 and 40 smallholder herds, respectively, using record cards that were updated during monthly visits. The sow-level medians were: weaning-to-service interval 3 months; interfarrowing interval 6.4 months; number of live-born piglets 9.0; and number of piglets weaned per litter 7.5. The piglet crude morbidity incidence risk was 29%. The cause-specific incidence risks for the important health problems encountered in preweaned piglets were diarrhea (4.3%), pruritus (17.1%), and skin necrosis (4.2%). The estimated crude mortality incidence risk to 8 weeks of age was 18.7%. The cause-specific mortality incidence risks to 8 weeks of age for the important causes of mortality were overlying (9.9%), savaging (2.4%), unviable piglets (2.0%) and unknown (1.9%). Overall, 78.8% of the total live-born piglet mortality occurred during the first week postpartum with 69% of these deaths being caused by overlying. The grower-pig crude morbidity incidence risk was 20% and the cause-specific incidence risks of the important health problems encountered were gut edema (1.3%), pruritus (21.1%), and unknown (2.3%). The crude mortality incidence risk was 3.8% and the important causes were gut edema and unknown causes (cause-specific mortality incidence risks of 1.3 and 1.6%, respectively). The median weight:age ratio and average daily weight gain for the grower pigs were 5.1 kg/month of age and 0.13 kg/day, respectively. For preweaning pigs, the median average daily weight gain was 0.13 g/day.